

COSMOPOLITAN CHRONICLE

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Drinks at the Cosmopolitan Saloon

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If Hollywood and TV were our only sources of what was supposedly available at a saloon in the 19th century, we would think all they had to offer was straight whisky, and bad whisky at that. While it is true that many saloons in mining towns were make-shift tents, and did have a limited fare, the saloons in larger cities, and especially those in hotels, had a considerably larger list of libations.

The Cosmopolitan for example advertised the "Uncle Toby." To find out what that was, I referred to *Jerry Thomas' Bartenders Guide* from 1862. In it are "Receipts for mixing all kinds of Punch, Eggnog, Juleps, Smashes, Cobblers, Cocktails, Sangarees, Mulls, Toddies, Slings, Sours, Flips, and 200 other fancy drinks." An Uncle Toby it turns out is

one of many kinds of punch. It is of English origin, the name based on a character in Shakespeare.

But punch to Jerry is not the mix of juice and liquor in a bowl. According to his book, "To make punch of any sort in perfection, the ambrosial essence of the lemon must be extracted by rubbing lumps of sugar on the rind, which breaks the delicate little vessels that contain the essence, and at the same time absorbs it. This, and making the mixture sweet and strong, using tea instead of water, and thoroughly amalgamating all the compounds, so that the taste of neither the bitter, the sweet, the spirit, nor the element, shall be perceptible one over the other, is the grand secret, only to be acquired by practice."

An Uncle Toby uses two lemons, including the juice, and "with the bruiser press the sugar and the juice particularly well." According to this recipe, two lemons, with the sugar and put into boiling water, and both brandy and rum added, makes about a gallon of punch, one quarter of which is the liquor.

You can and should then add a half pint of porter to give "richness."

There are hundreds of other such recipes in this amazing book. One, mulled wine, is in verse. It requires nine eggs, boiling water, nutmeg, and a bottle of good wine (Claret). Another, hot egg-nogg, states "This drink is very popular in California." Using Cognac brandy, and Santa Cruz rum, it is mixed in what "Every well ordered bar has" a tin egg-nogg "shaker" which is "a great aid in mixing this beverage."

Despite all the drinks found in the book, some of course are not. Martinis are sometimes credited to Jerry Thomas, in 1870, at the time a bartender in San Francisco. He called it a Martinez, supposedly due to the miner customer's destination. A Martinez does appear in the 1887 version of Thomas' book. The Margarita is credited to two different bartenders, one in 1934, another in 1948. And one drink invented in 1985, becoming popular in the 1990s also is not included, the Cosmopolitan.

